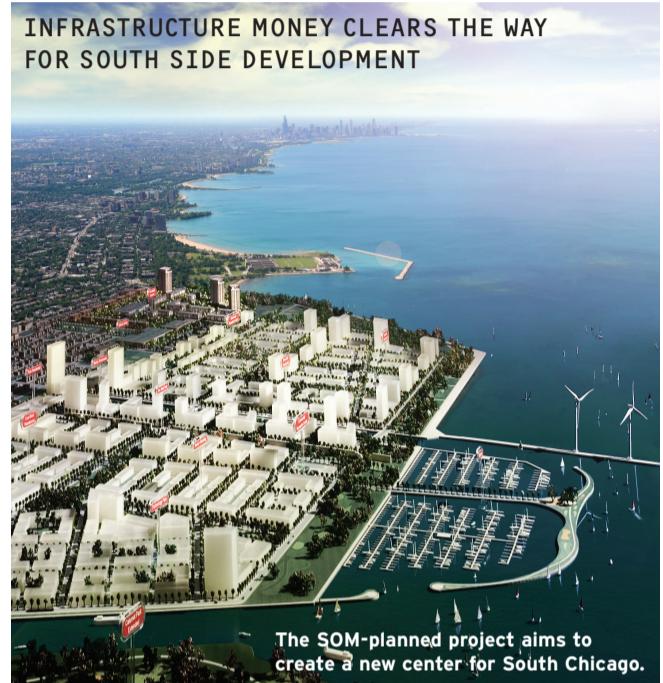


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MAKE NO LITTLE TIFS

In late May, Chicago's Community Development Commission agreed to award \$96 million in tax-increment financing for the massive

mixed-use project located between 79th Street and the Calumet River known as South Works. Based on a masterplan by SOM **continued on page 10**

**GROWTH SPURT**

Bloomfield Hills, MI, is a long way from Texas where Lake/Flato, an Austin-based firm, has a reputation for their

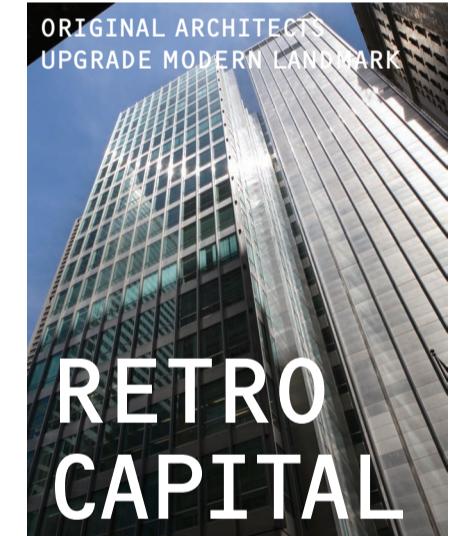
site- and climate-sensitive work, including the Lance Armstrong Foundation in Austin and the award-winning

World Birding Center in Mission, TX. But the architects (and winners of the 2004 AIA Firm Award) are no strangers to school design, having completed over a dozen academic buildings for private institutions, independent schools, and state universities. And that is what made them ideal for the job of **continued on page 4**

DALEY ADMINISTRATION WANTS ARCHITECTS TO CUT FEES**THE UNBILLABLES**

About one in three architects in Chicago is out of work according to AIA Chicago estimates, and many of those still hanging on are doing so just barely. This is why the chapter is particularly alarmed by a recent request from the Daley administration that firms doing business with the city reduce their fees by 10 percent, a move that would be retroactive, no less.

The request, made in a letter sent out to firms on April 22, presents them with a number of difficult **continued on page 3**



The initial phases of a landmark restoration and sustainability upgrade are currently underway at the Inland Steel Building, the 1958 skyscraper that was the first major project to be built in **continued on page 9**



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THE UNBILLABLES continued from front page decisions. They could choose not to comply, as the city insists the request is voluntary, though this could also imperil future civic work, which is one of the few sectors still providing employment for firms in the Windy City.

"The public sector is the major arena for anyone in construction or architecture right now," Walter Street, the chapter president, said in an interview. "We're hoping it will serve the purpose of stimulating the rest of the economy." Street would not go so far as to criticize the administration. "It was a request, it wasn't a mandate, so I'm not going to erect any tiny barriers or problems before they occur. We're not in a position to speculate on what the city might do."

Still, the request comes at an unwelcome time, just as the industry is beginning to

LEEDING BY EXAMPLE

Frank Gehry's recent dismissal of green building in general and LEED in particular had the benefit of sparking debate. Blair Kamin quoted the 81-year-old Gehry as saying that the issue of sustainability "is finally a political one," adding that green buildings "don't pay back in your lifetime" and stating that LEED gives credits for "bogus stuff." While I could not agree more about the need for greater political action to advance a green agenda, Gehry's remarks were shockingly simplistic and tone deaf.

Certainly LEED can be criticized—certified Silver parking garages, anyone?—but Gehry, as the country's best-known architect, is in an unrivaled leadership position with unmatched access to the public's attention, and he does the profession a disservice by speaking so reductively. One can guess at his reasons for making these statements—certainly he is not known for sustainability and his office has suffered as much as any in the Great Recession—but with acclaim and notoriety comes a degree of responsibility.

The impact of the built environment on climate change and other ecological crises is undeniable, and LEED has had a greater influence on greening the way we build than any other tool or individual. To return to Gehry's point about the need for political action, according to the USGBC, LEED standards have been adopted, required, or incentivized in 45 states, mostly at the municipal level. The ratings system's explosive growth has been due in large part to its application as a legislative standard. Chicago currently has the most certified green public buildings in the nation, a title the city rightfully touts.

Greater attention to the environmental impacts of buildings has also been good for architects. Tens of thousands of design professionals have taken LEED exams, giving them expertise that is valued in the marketplace. Architects and designers are seen as having something important to contribute to business, to building community, and to promoting health and social responsibility.

They also have power to move the market. As thousands of architects, designers, and facilities managers gather in Chicago for NeoCon, it's easy to see the impact that green design has had on the building products and commercial furnishings industries. Every year, hundreds of new products are introduced by companies boasting of their eco pedigrees. Will carpet made from recycled fiber or low-VOC-coated casegoods save the planet? Of course not. But I believe well-ventilated, daylit buildings are more pleasant places to work and live, they often use less energy, and I'd rather my carpet didn't leave me feeling light-headed. Big changes often come through an accumulation of small ones.

As a late turn in his career, I would love to see Gehry trade titanium for photovoltaics. The need for greener buildings is only going to increase, and while the master form-maker may not be interested in scoring rating points, a high-performance building would help push his work into the next era, rather than letting it stand as emblematic of the last. **ALAN G. BRAKE**

recover from a recession. The Department of Labor even found that last year, more architects lost their jobs than any other non-farm workers. And while billings in the Midwest have been improving for the past three quarters, making it the strongest performing region, they dipped slightly in April according to the national AIA, a worrisome sign.

"We don't have a lot of wiggle room," Street said. "Most of our people have made all the cuts they can to keep the work within budget while still delivering an excellent product." He also noted that architects are beholden not only to the city but also to the end user, and must maintain certain standards, which can cost money.

The administration's request is directed at all businesses contracting with the city, from printers to security guards. Part of the argument

behind the request is that city employees have already been asked to take a roughly 10 percent pay cut in their salaries.

While acknowledging the plight of all vendors, Zurich Esposito, executive vice president of AIA Chicago, argues that architects are especially susceptible to the reduced fees. Not only is the instability of the industry a compounding factor, Esposito argues, but there's the labor-intensive nature of the work. One particularly troubling provision of the request is that firms are asked not to pass on their fee reductions to sub-contractors and consultants. This would put a disproportionate burden on architects because of the prevalence of consultants used in design work.

"It's an intimidating request," Esposito said. "What should happen if you don't accept it?" Despite the voluntary nature of the request,

FARMING OUT DESIGN continued from front page rethink how infrastructure can be used to create public architecture," said Martin Felsen, the director of Archeworks. Felsen believes land-rich areas like Chicago's South Side offer opportunities to develop local food systems. "There's also an interest in green jobs and new economies in underserved areas," he added.

As a part of an investigation into the local food and urban agriculture movements, Archeworks students and faculty volunteered at farmers markets, community gardens, and cooking workshops. "Initially, we thought about designing something enclosed, more like a shed," said Mason Pritchett, who co-directed the project with Jesse Vogler. "Then we realized we wanted more of an open plane, a community facilitator, between furniture and architecture." In partnership with the Gary Comer Youth Center on the South Side, the MFC will be used to expand the nonprofit's burgeoning farming initiatives.

The Archeworks studio commissioned a fabricator to build the unit's steel frame, and then students built out the rest of the structure using reclaimed lumber. They hope to add a bicycle fleet to haul boxes dispatched from the cart for deliveries. In addition to the collaboration with Comer, the school hopes to use the MFC to work with other nonprofit and community groups. "The unit can perform a lot of operations for different stakeholders," Pritchett said.

The inclusion in the Biennale marks a global debut for the school. "It's the first time our work has been shown abroad," Felsen said. "Traditionally, our goals have been focused on local problems. It's natural that our work should have a larger audience." **AGB**



MASON PRITCHETT

some are seeing it as a threat, and one passage in particular from the letter stands out: "We must remind you that compliance with this request is voluntary, but that the city always seeks to do business with vendors that offer the most competitive prices."

The mayor insisted that the decision remains up to the firms, though it would certainly help the city if they assented. "You're not going to threaten them," Daley told *The Tribune* at a press conference. "This is a good thing. This is a good concept. We're trying to keep government going."

According to the *Tribune*, \$760 million out of the \$6.1 billion budget goes to contract work. Last year, vendors were asked to take a 2 percent cut, and about 30 percent did so for a saving of \$4 million.

MATT CHABAN



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TYLLIE BARBOSA

In Lakeview, a tiny ice cream boutique is tempting Chicagoans with a cheery design and equally sweet desserts. The family-owned company is the first to bring the Taiwanese "snow ice" to the city. After naming the spot for a blissfully happy state of mind, the two siblings set out to find designers that could create a truly fun, colorful, and soft interior. The job was a good fit for Product Architecture + Design, a firm with a notable portfolio of children's libraries. "We know that these spaces don't have to be silly, and that they can be whimsical and modern at the same time," said Dan Pohrte, a principal at the firm. To make the 30-seat eatery appear more spacious, the designers went for a clean and graphic look, where a few key areas were given a punch of bold colors, inspired by the multiple shades of the fluffy ices. Suspended from the ceiling in different elevations are randomly placed soap bubble-shaped pendants from Kartell, and above the counter, a pink fluorescent light box calls to passersby after closing time. **REBECKA GORDAN**

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CROWNING PORKOPOLIS

What's the cliché? You can dress up a pig but it's still a pig? I can't remember. Some terrible former governor, who will not be named, used the line a lot. Anyway! The Great American Tower, the newest addition to Cincinnati's skyline, was recently topped off with a giant tiara inspired by **Diana, Princess of Wales**. The glitzy tower could be the ugliest building in the Midwest. It's a toss-up as to whether the Royal Family will add this to its rather lengthy list of regal embarrassments—oh **Fergie!**—or delight in the ghastly tribute. After all, the tower will be the tallest in the city, surpassing the Carew Tower, which reigned supreme since 1930 with its beautiful art deco interiors. The tiara's (and building's) design cred go to **Gyo Obata**, the "O" of HOK. Eavesdrop wonders why Gyo did not look to local royalty, like former mayor **Jerry Springer**. A skyscraper inspired by guests throwing chairs at one another could be interesting!

PARTY IN THE POMO PHIL-JO LIBRARY

Shannon Stratton, executive director of threewalls, the contemporary art incubator and gallery, kindly invited Eavesdrop to their annual party and silent auction being held in **Philip Johnson**'s postmodern office building 190 South LaSalle. The so-strange-it-was-fab event, themed "Office Romance," took place in the Library, a nutso 40th-floor Cambridge-inspired law library and event space whose stacks are overlit with 80s-tastic green fluorescent bulbs. Among the guests donning faux-cigarettes befitting the *Mad Men* meets **Bret Easton Ellis** vibe, Eavesdrop stumbled into architects **Dirk Denison** and **David Harris Salkin** (a graduate of Tulane's School of Architecture and URBANbuild). We were grateful for the company, but perhaps we got too comfortable and had one too many Manhattans. The silent art auction was suddenly irresistible, and brought out a competitiveness in Eavesdrop previously only seen during rounds of mini-golf. We walked away with a large-format photograph by the Swiss-born artist **Selina Trepp**. Shannon, you can send a thank-you note to Eavesdrop, c/o AN.

SEND THANK-YOU NOTES, CASTLE MOATS, AND OLD BILLY GOATS TO
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GROWTH SPURT continued from front page
adding a new middle school for girls to the Kingswood School at Cranbrook.

One of the earliest and most detailed of the Cranbrook buildings by Eliel Saarinen (and members of his family, including a young Eero) in the 1930s, the original Kingswood School for Girls, according to project architect Brantley Hightower, was designed when Saarinen was in his "Wrightian phase," creating buildings with an intense sense of craft and a complex array of scales and materials. For a new middle school for girls located where a meadow meets the woods on the 300-acre campus, Lake/Flato were charged with matching the richness of the original on a budget of less than \$200 per square foot.

Lake/Flato approached the 48,000-square-foot school in a way they hoped would resonate with Saarinen's "fusing of craft with the leading technologies of the day," Hightower said. They especially sought to copy his manner of connecting buildings to the landscape and weaving craft into the fabric of structure, no easy task on a skimpy budget. Their solution was to cluster classrooms around three commons, each with its own pavilion or "box" that provided a special experience, whether dance studio, stage, or theater, and each with the built-in seating to accommodate those activities. Throughout, "nodes of craft," often maple elements, were added at terminating points to heighten impact.

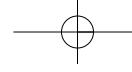
Partner in charge Greg Papay noted that much of Lake/Flato's work is based in climates warmer than the weather on the wind-swept plains of Michigan. In Texas, even large



buildings can be open to the outside year-long, while here a more modulated approach was necessary. "We learned from Saarinen about creating cloistered views into intimate spaces, but also across larger views," said Papay about making the commons both open outdoor spaces but also protected from the elements.

Materials had to be simple, but Lake/Flato also wanted them to be both local and textured. They used a masonry concrete block from a local source and composed of an aggregate flecked with Michigan's own colored stones. A glazed brick that has been used in other buildings, along with judicious touches of copper and warm maple used on the interiors, complete a surprisingly rich palette. The Cranbrook Kingswood Girls' Middle School, scheduled for completion by November, is situated not far from other recent buildings on the campus including Steven Holl's Institute of Science (1996) and Tod Williams and Billie Tsien's Natatorium (1999). "We may have had a low budget," said Papay, "but our aim was to tie into the history while still giving the school all the excitement of the other new buildings at Cranbrook."

JULIE V. IOVINE



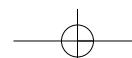
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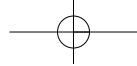
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ALL PHOTOS: MARK BALOGG, EXCEPT BELOW LEFT: ANDREW METTER

There's something different about being enveloped by nature versus merely looking at it, just as cruising down a road on a bicycle stimulates smell, sound, sight, and awareness more than does travel inside a car. For the Serta International Center near Chicago, Andy Metter, senior vice president and principal designer of Epstein | Metter Studio, has taken a sense of being within nature to the workplace, floating a 90,000-square-foot building atop a 20-acre Illinois prairie site at the edge of a wetland.

According to Metter, the planning strategy is organized in response to the land. "It came out of the notion of the beauty of the landscape and wanting to have a strong relationship to the site; to have a building responding to and growing from the site."

The mattress company's principal goal for the project has to do with employee attraction and retention—what Metter describes as Serta's strength, and a priority that corporate executives strive to maintain. With 65,000 square feet dedicated to office space and another 25,000 devoted to a high-bay research and development facility, the 700-foot-long-by-67-foot-wide building also houses

amenities like outdoor work areas and an employee lunchroom with a trellised outdoor wooden deck, as well as a large showroom, a training auditorium, and an employee lounge.

The building's program is expressed by a consistent interior and exterior massing strategy designed to frame the views. "Each opening gives a sense of prospect that positions the viewer toward the horizon," said Metter. The attenuated nature of the building (taking the form of an unfolded Z-shape) means that there is plenty of natural and borrowed light with views of both the prairie and wetlands for all employees. Individual thermostats and operable windows throughout the facility provide employees access to fresh air and personalized thermal control of the space.

The new building consolidates five former corporate locations under one roof to streamline the organization's communication processes and encourage collaboration among departments. Guests and employees access the building by means of a ramp placed at the east and west elevations of the site. Both ramps gently guide visitors to the building's raised structure and form the recessed entry lobby

that Metter designed to "read like a punch through the building, telegraphing the landscape from both elevations." Other support functions that intersect with the long and narrowly shaped structure, like the stepped training auditorium and conference rooms, project out from the building skin like an open, aluminum-and-glass chest of drawers. "These areas are discrete from the rest of the center's program, therefore the architecture expresses their distinction," he adds.

Metter negotiates the public and private aspects of the headquarter building through a double circulation strategy. The east elevation corridor, with a view onto the prairie, is zoned for visitors and separated from work areas and proprietary information through the linear placement of translucent, glass-enclosed support functions. The west elevation is intended for office workers, with wide-open spaces, low-paneled workstations, and views looking toward the wetlands. A second-floor showroom overlooks the two-story research facility where employees, wholesalers, and customers are introduced to Serta's products.

Throughout the headquarter building, the interior materials

The spare, clean interior emphasizes views of the prairie landscape. A neutral palette and abundant natural light create a serene work environment.

take their cue from the exterior finishes of post-tensioned concrete, aluminum panels, and glass—lots of glass. Inside, the glass walls are clear, translucent, or fluted to mediate privacy and maximize daylight penetration.

Black rubber or terrazzo flooring materials separate the floor surface from the pure whiteness of the wall and ceiling planes, furthering the notion of the building floating above the prairie. Inside, private offices and conference rooms receive aluminum-colored sound-absorbing fabric panels detailed to align with the aluminum panels of the exterior. The white, gray, and glass-paneled workstations with black upholstered desk chairs complete the composition in the open areas.

While the architecture and interior envelope are both purposefully neutral, the color inside the building is in constant flux, thanks to the center's insertion and integration into the natural environment where the sun, sky, and seasonal colors transform the prairie, the building, and the spaces within. **CINDY COLEMAN**

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NEW MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT TO URBANIZE WRIGLEYVILLE



COURTESY SCB

The project's scale defers to Wrigley Field, while it adds density and retail to the area.

also be removed. "There will be wider sidewalks on Clark Street, new street trees, new alleys, lots of bricks-and-mortar improvements for the neighborhood," Lawson said.

accessed from the street, and second-story spaces will have ground-level frontage as well. The project's design reflects elements in the neighborhood, including corresponding building heights and brick and limestone elements in the facade. Lahey stressed that the project won't mimic the historic ballpark. "It will be a contemporary building, not a nostalgic one," he said.

Several buildings that house businesses will be demolished to make way for the project, including the Improv Olympics, a comedy venue. Lawson said the alderman's office will work to relocate the businesses, some within the new project. Several large billboards will

also be removed. "There will be wider sidewalks on Clark Street, new street trees, new alleys, lots of bricks-and-mortar improvements for the neighborhood," Lawson said.

The developers also noted the project's sustainable features, including green roofs and gardens, bike parking, and LEED construction, along with its location near an El stop and several bus lines. "Shouldn't we have denser development near transit nodes?" Lahey asked.

Lahey agrees that the project will change the character of the neighborhood, though he feels for the better. "Now the site isn't very urban. It's a lot of parking lots and single-story buildings," he said. "A building can clarify and organize a place. It will be a foil to Wrigley Field that will strengthen the fabric of the area." **AGB**

TRIPLE PLAY

Wrigley Field may be getting a new neighbor. The planned Addison Park on Clark development, which includes residences, retail space, and hotel rooms located adjacent to the ballpark, has gained the backing of 44th Ward Alderman Tom Tunney. The proposal needs final approval from the Chicago Plan Commission and the City Council Zoning Committee before it can proceed, and the alderman's support is seen as critical to

moving the project forward. The development would bring significant new density to the area, but opponents fear the retail-intensive project could alter the character of the neighborhood.

The project would be comparable in height to the historic ballpark and would be built on a combination of surface parking lots and on the site of existing, mostly single-story buildings along Clark Street. In response to

concerns from some neighbors and business owners, the developers, M&R, have substantially reduced the scale of the project, which originally included two towers that would have loomed over the field.

"It's been a two-and-a-half year process. The developers have greatly reduced the height and have worked closely with the community development committee to respond to neighborhood concerns," said Bennett

Lawson, deputy alderman for the ward.

Designed by Solomon Cordwell Buenz (SCB), the current scheme will include 135 rental apartments, 137 hotel rooms, and over 145,000 square feet of retail space on two levels. "The project will reinforce the vibrant retail corridor," said John Lahey, SCB's president. "It's not a mall at all. It will be a very active street front." Retail spaces will all be

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HAFELE
FINDING BETTER WAYS

RETRO CAPITAL continued from front page downtown Chicago after the end of the Great Depression. The structure's column-free, modular interiors served by an adjacent tower of circulation and mechanicals is a shining example of form-follows-function modernism, and helped to usher in a new era of office culture. Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), the building's original design firm, is in charge of taking this seminal work into the 21st century. In 2007, a development team that included Frank Gehry and New York real estate player Richard Cohen of Capital Properties purchased the 19-story, 232,450-square-foot property for approximately \$57 million, and set out to transform the aging structure into Class A space.

"Frank has always admired this building and thought it necessary that its restoration be seen under the authorship of SOM," said Stephen Apking, the firm's partner-in-charge on the project. "We were all enamored with the role that Inland Steel played in its time in terms of new ideas, and felt that this spirit of innovation should be carried ahead."

Starting in 2008, SOM drew up a masterplan for the project that included recommendations for everything from bringing the lobby back to its original character to sustainability upgrades that would earn the building a LEED Platinum rating. While it had been a Chicago Landmark since the late 1990s, the team also got



EZRA STOLLER/ESTO

Inland Steel on the National Register of Historic Places, garnering federal money for the restoration.

The Inland Steel building is undergoing a sustainable restoration.

The plan from the start was to bank on the building's cultural cachet and aesthetic appeal to attract tenants. In an extreme version of the Seagram Building's enforced ceiling condition at the perimeter, SOM developed a modular office system of movable floors, ceilings, and walls that can be adjusted to fit the needs of shifting populations. The idea, which the firm calls "office hotel," is that companies who take up residence here will not be looking to conduct their own interior fit-out, but will be happy to adopt the branding built into the architecture.

The strategy also has a sustainability component, as every time someone new moves, there will be no waste created by interior demolition. The modular systems in place will simply be reconfigured for a new set of needs. Other sustainability upgrades in SOM's master

AARON SEWARD



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THE FINE LINE

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INDIANAPOLIS MUSEUM OF ART'S NEW GROUNDS FOR CULTURE

SCULPTURE FIELDS



COURTESY IMA

On June 20, the 100-acre Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park at the Indianapolis Museum of Art opens to the public. Designed by landscape architect Edward L. Blake with a visitors center by Marlon Blackwell, the park boasts woodlands, wetlands, a lake, and meadows, and is dotted with temporary site-specific sculptures that explore the relationship between humanity and the natural environment. The opening roster of artists includes Atelier Van Lieshout, Kendall Buster, Alfredo Jaar, Jeppe Hein, Los Carpinteros, Tea Mäkipää, Type A, and Andrea Zittel (her *Indianapolis Island* is pictured above). Formerly a gravel pit, the park borders the White River and the 52-acre campus of the museum. Unlike traditional sculpture parks, which typically include permanent works by more established artists, at the Art & Nature Park the museum will commission younger artists, many of whom have not worked at the civic scale. The temporary commissions, which will engage different sites around the park, will also renew the experience for repeat visitors. AGB



MAKE NO LITTLE TIFS continued from front page Chicago and Sasaki Associates, the development could eventually include millions of square feet of retail and residential space as well as a series of new lakefront parks, and function as a new center for the city's South Side.

The public money will fund construction of roads, sewers, and other elements currently absent from the former industrial land. "The TIF money is absolutely necessary for us to move ahead, since there's no public infra-

structure on site," said Nasutsa Mabwa, a project manager with McCaffery Interests, the project's co-developer along with U.S. Steel. The most important piece of infrastructure is a new access road, U.S. 41, which will function as a four-lane extension of Lake Shore Drive with a landscaped median. "It's an important catalyst," said Phil Enquist, SOM's partner in charge of urban design and planning. "This will allow access to the lakefront and spur development on a site that isn't currently being used by anyone."

The total project area covers 369 acres, approximately 120 of which have been reserved for lakefront parks. The project follows LEED for Neighborhood Design guidelines, so it emphasizes connectivity with pedestrian-scaled streets, along with innovative water management to filter much of the runoff back into Lake Michigan. The project, which would be built out over a 20-to 45-year period, could eventually include up to nearly 14,000 units of housing and a new elementary and high school, as well as extensive retail and some office space, plus a 1,500-slip marina. A smaller tract of land to the south, owned by Solo Cups, remains undeveloped, and no plans for the property have been announced.

The first phase, which McCaffery will begin marketing to retailers at a conference this fall, will include approximately 800,000 square feet of retail and residential space, designed by Chicago-based Antunovich Associates. Located west of the new Lake Shore Drive extension, the first phase will be immediately adjacent to the existing neighborhood. Construction is expected to commence in 2012 following completion of the new access road. The Chicago Park District will build out the new lakefront areas in accordance with the SOM/Sasaki plan. Enquist said some of the building foundations and walls may be retained in the parks to reflect the area's industrial past.

The team hopes the project will provide new retail, dining, and recreational options for the South Side, an area that has long been overlooked by developers. Enquist pointed out that the site is closer to downtown Chicago than Evanston, and he believes that

Left: The project's first phase, in the foreground, will include a large retail center. **Below:** The site is a former brownfield. The portion at the southern end is owned by Solo Cups. No plans for it have been announced.

the South Works development could be comparable in scale and economic importance to Evanston's downtown. "It's big enough to have that kind of impact. It's planned to be a very diverse community, with housing of a variety of sizes and price points. It will be a real neighborhood, not just a shopping center."

"This area is not well known to Chicagoans," Enquist added. "Currently, you can't even access it by car. When people see this land, it will be a big surprise. I'm always knocked over by the beauty of the site." **AGB**



COURTESY SOM



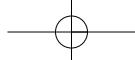
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A new generation of designers taps Chicago's considerable resources to support a vital and expanding community of young movers and makers.

By Samantha Topol

MAKING A SCENE

Braving the lightning bolts of an early summer storm, Chicago's intrepid designers and design aficionados came out in force to attend last year's Guerrilla Furniture and Art Truck Show outside Morlen Sinoway Atelier. This year, the event promises to be even more robust, with more than 30 U-Haul trucks registered to showcase wares, and enough coordinated events—14 to be precise—scheduled to warrant making a map for the first time in the six-year history of the event.

This expansion is one

of many signs that Chicago is primed to support the ambitions of a growing community of designers now calling the city home. With ample space for affordable studios, industrial manufacturing within close range of the city center, three design schools, and a variety of new forums to show design work, Chicago provides all the crucial ingredients for a vital design scene. Not to mention that the Art Institute of Chicago's Modern Wing, now one year old, dedicates the most square footage of exhibition

This page:
Revolution Glassware by Felicia Ferrone.
Opposite, top:
Smith and Linder's Pipette fiber optic and LED lamps.
Opposite, below:
ODL at the 2009 Guerrilla Furniture and Art Truck Show.
Opposite, top right:
Coil Lamp by Craighton Berman.
Opposite, below right:
The event-based Volume Gallery showed work by Jonathan Nesci at the Andrew Rafacz Gallery in March.

magnets, part mentoring opportunities, part business showcase, these outlets make sure that young designers find strength in numbers as well as the chance to show their work to best advantage before a supportive audience.

Lisa Smith and Caroline Linder, graduates of the first Designed Objects class at the School of the Art Institute (SAIC), stayed in Chicago to start their own office, Smith and Linder, as well as the Object Design League. Since ODL's inception in 2009, it has grown to be both a social and commercial nexus for new Chicago design, having hosted events, sponsored design charrettes, curated exhibitions, and most recently, opened a pop-up shop carrying objects by ODL participants alongside designers new to the Midwest. *Worth Your Salt* was staged inside an existing Bucktown boutique for three weeks, and for Smith, it fulfilled ODL's aspirations to bring young designers together to both share their ideas and sell their work. The shop/exhibit, said Smith, "tried to address the entire design community: designers, retailers, and consumers. The success of the shop was that we sold a good volume of stuff. In design, unlike contemporary art, it's okay for it to be a more commercial activity."

Finding a way to put work out into the world is among the biggest challenges for any designer. Volume Gallery, started by Claire Warner and Sam Vinz, two former employees of Chicago-based Wright, one of the country's premier auction houses for modern and contemporary design, is also forging new territory in this respect. Volume refers to itself as event-based, with exhibitions staged in different locations suited to the project in question. Limited-edition objects at a range of prices in order to make the work accessible for young design collectors are featured as well. Though Warner and Vinz are ultimately interested in representing American design at large, their first two collaborations are with the Chicago-based designers Jonathan Nesci and Felicia Ferrone. "There are so many people doing interesting



work in Chicago," said Warner. "They are often just working on a smaller scale. What we wanted to do as a gallery is help create a platform for designers to do a comprehensive collection." For Volume's next event this fall, Ferrone is exploring work with local manufacturers to produce objects in a range of scales that take

the entire exhibition space into consideration. "I feel really fortunate," Ferrone said. "Volume offers an amazing freedom to allow designers to produce their own vision."

Invariably, Chicago design professionals cite the many top university programs as key to this burgeoning design culture. Between the

historic Institute of Design at Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), the Industrial Design program (and its recently opened Innovation Center) at the University of Illinois, Chicago (UIC), and the Masters in Design Objects at SAIC, now in its third year, Chicago's design education landscape has never been more vibrant.

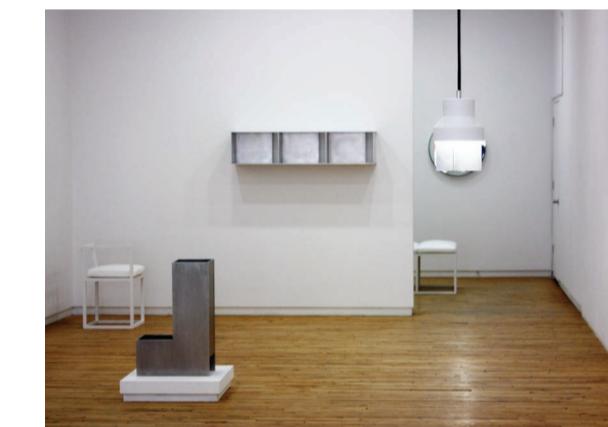
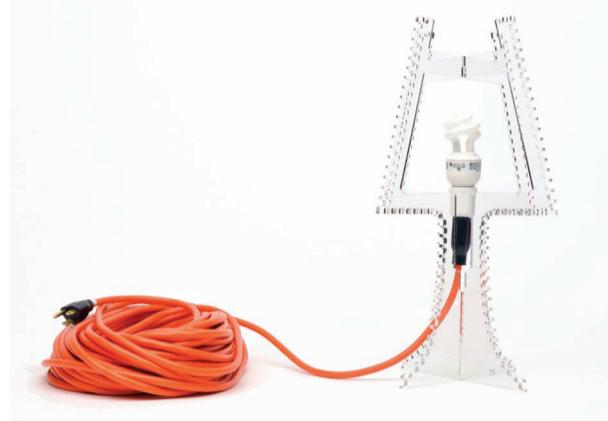
The pedagogy of each program varies, with IIT being characterized as the most scientific, UIC as strong in interdisciplinary collaborative practice, and SAIC as drawing on a more European model of individual craft. For Helen Maria Nugent, director of SAIC's Design Objects track, "All of the schools have really different but not incompatible approaches. When we were developing the program, we looked really closely at other schools in Chicago and considered [SAIC's] art context. Many of our faculty came from Europe

or studied at Cranbrook. We also looked to programs like London's Royal College of Art and ECAL in Switzerland, where designers had the opportunity to be independent in a studio environment."

Above and beyond education, Marcia Lausen, director of the School of Art and Design at UIC and principal of the graphic design firm Studio/lab, has observed a shift in the city's newly established practices. "Chicago is becoming a place less driven by the pragmatism of the past, and more about critical or reflective practice," she noted. "The city used to be full of designers without an educational training, and that is really changing." Thinkmore, a four-person studio founded in 2009 by Hemmant Jha, is one practice exploring ways to bridge Chicago's intellectual and professional worlds. One of the first projects for Jha and his partners, who all have dual backgrounds in engineering and design, was a self-initiated design for an affordable wheelchair. The social implications were significant, and after a partnership with a local rehabilitation center was slowed by legal considerations, Thinkmore established a nonprofit called Wheelwell in order to open

the project to different collaborators to help bring a design to market. For Jha, research labs at universities offer the benefit of investment in a design's intelligence, so he began a product design workshop at IIT this past spring. Both wheelchair users and venture capitalists were brought in to critique the final projects, and two designs from the course will continue development. "Designing the object is the fun part, but it is also a small part," Jha said. "In order to get something like this made and into the world requires a broader set of skills and expertise." Any profits generated by the project would be recirculated into the curriculum at IIT to fund similar courses.

With growth come financial needs. Designers and educators alike hope the city will offer more support in the form of grants or recognition. There's a pervasive sense that this is necessary because young American designers, without a more

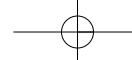


the bigger picture."

For Zoe Ryan, who along with her curatorial work is also teaching a course at UIC, a new paradigm is emerging. "Designers are thinking in a much more manifold way, with many types of creative projects in one studio," she said, citing Chicago's deep design history across disciplines, its schools, and the presence of consulting firms like IDEO as important components of the current rapid expansion of design activities. Rather than calling this new work emerging, however, Ryan puts it differently: "Designers, at their best, are ambidextrous. They make multiple turns in their careers, which can all be said to be very emerging, in terms of using new technology or finding new formal solutions." In other words, Chicago's designers are on a roll.

SAMANTHA TOPOL IS A CHICAGO-BASED WRITER.





THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JUNE 9, 2010

**THE NEOCON WORLD'S TRADE FAIR PRESENTS
COLOR ARRAYS AND A BOLD WAY WITH WHITE AT THIS YEAR'S
CONTRACT FURNISHINGS MARKET.**

BY JENNIFER K. GORSCHE



1



2



3



4

A BRIGHT OUTLOOK

1 DAMA COFFEE TABLE
CR&S POLIFORM

The Dama Coffee Table by CR&S adapts to a range of room configurations and styles. The seamless, solid-wood table is approximately 13 by 18 inches and is available in canaletto walnut and cedarwood finishes. www.poliform.it

2 SEEK
ALLSTEEL

Allsteel's Seek lightweight chair has three storage configurations, allowing it to be stacked and nested without racks or trolleys. Available in eight colors with optional arms and a cushioned seat, a flexing back and ergonomic design make it a more comfortable folding chair, and a healthier one, too. Seek is expected to qualify for SCS Indoor Advantage Gold certification for air quality. www.allsteeloffice.com

3 LYRA COLLECTION
KI

The Lyra collection from KI aims to fill a gap between formal and informal furniture. Bases are available in wood or steel, along with several upholstery combinations, allowing the lounge chairs, loveseats, ottomans, and tables to adapt to modern or traditional environments. www.ki.com

4 CURIO TABLE
BERNHARDT DESIGN

Designed by Claudia and Harry Washington for Bernhardt Design, the Curio table is available in bright or muted lacquered colors, but also in a range of natural wood finishes for a more reserved look. The beveled top is available in 19-, 22-, and 42-inch diameters and is sturdy enough to accommodate a glass or Corian surface for high-traffic areas. www.bernhardtdesign.com

5 URBAN METALLICS
CARNEGIE

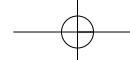
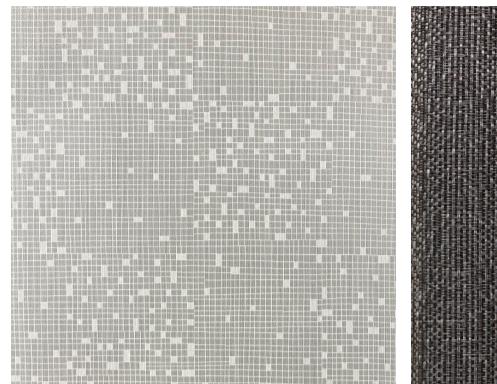
The Urban Metallics collection is Carnegie's newest addition to its Surface IQ wall-covering line of PVC-free surfaces that use only water-based inks and coatings, but still have high abrasion resistance and tolerance for bleach-based cleaners. The line includes a variety of metallic patterns and scales (Midas is pictured), each of which are Cradle to Cradle Silver certified. www.carnegiefabrics.com

6 FROST
CHILEWICH CONTRACT

Frost is an industrially derived surface available in three shimmering shades, Black, Topaz, and Mineral, with a transparent fiber coating that changes the surface's appearance depending on lighting direction. With the appropriate backing material, Frost can be used in a variety of ways including as wall-to-wall and tile flooring, floor mats, wall covering, and upholstery fabric. www.chilewich.com/contract

7 RODARTE TEXTILES
KNOLL LUXE

Knoll's luxury fabric division collaborated with fashion house Rodarte to create five upholstery and three drapery patterns named after poets and inspired by the fashion house's runway collections. Auden (pictured) is an ombre pattern printed digitally on woven raffia and is available in four colorways. www.knoll-luxe.com

FEATURE
15

5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13

8 VEIN CUT ONYX
STONE SOURCE

Vein Cut Onyx from Stone Source is available in white or green, each with natural vein patterns and translucency. The 2-centimeter-thick slabs can be used for interior walls and counters, but are not recommended for kitchen countertops. www.stonesource.com

9 ENEA LOTTUS TABLE
COALESSE

Designed by Barcelona-based design trio Lievore Altherr Molina for Enea of Spain, Lottus tables are available in the full range of Coalesse veneer and laminate colors, with four complementary colors for the painted metal base. Four heights and diameters from 30 to 72 inches allow the table to fit a range of spaces and match several seating options, including Lottus chairs and stools. www.coalesse.com

10 SAVA
STYLEX

Sava Cvek's new design for Stylex is a multitask chair that combines engineering and aesthetics to create a versatile design. The chair is available with task or conference arms with a high or mid-back design with mesh or upholstered finishes and low-profile paddles to control height, tension, seat depth, and tilt. www.stylexseating.com

11 DR DESK
JOFCO

Claudio Bellini's DR desk design for Italian manufacturer Frezza combines a simple table with a carefully designed desk and storage element. The desk's legs are carved entirely from solid walnut wood, creating a striking contrast to the optional glasswork surfaces and painted drawers. www.jofco.com

12 FLOW BENCH
ARKTURA

Designed by LA-based Chris Kabatsi, the Flow Bench from Arkutura is formed from eco-composite materials that are suitable for residential and commercial interiors. Available in orange, black, and white, the bench is 72 inches long, and next year will be joined by Kabatsi's similarly fluid Squall coffee table. www.arktura.com

13 FCB SERIES
SEDIA SYSTEMS

Herzog and de Meuron designed Sedia Systems' FCB Series of stadium seats as a flexible option for arenas, auditoriums, and classrooms. The line includes fixed shell or gravity uplift seats and four upholstered VIP seats, with optional flip-up desk system and a slender profile designed to maximize aisle space. www.sediasystems.com

15 BRAM BOO BENCH
SHOWN ON FRONT PAGE
VANERUMSTELTER

Belgian designer Bram Boo's bench fosters socialization, rest, and work all in one piece of furniture. Four seats arranged in a square create four desktops and multiple ways to face others. The bench is available in red and black. www.vanerumstelter.com

JUNE

WEDNESDAY 9
EXHIBITION OPENING
Flower, Landscape and Nature Exhibit
Murphy Hill Gallery
3333 West Arthington Ave.
Chicago
www.murphyhillgallery.com

THURSDAY 10
LECTURE
Russell Bowman,
Eugenie Johnson, et al.
Who is Charles Steffen?
6:00 p.m.
The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art
756 North Milwaukee Ave.
Chicago
www.art.org

FRIDAY 11
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Jacqueline Moses

Focus Four
Illinois State Museum
Chicago Gallery
100 West Randolph St.
Chicago
www.museum.state.il.us

Ray CRO Noland
Sweet Tea & American Values
Chicago Urban Art Society
2229 South Halsted St.
Chicago
chicagourbanartsociety.org

SATURDAY 12
LECTURE
Valerie Steele
Chanel and her Rivals:
Fashion in the Age of Steichen
1:00 p.m.
The Nelson-Atkins
Museum of Art
4525 Oak St., Kansas City
www.nelson-atkins.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Walker Evans
Decade by Decade
Cincinnati Art Museum
953 Eden Park Dr., Cincinnati
cincinnatiartmuseum.org

Sound & Vision
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

THURSDAY 15
LECTURE
You Call This Art?
2:00 p.m.
Indianapolis Museum of Art
4000 Michigan Rd.
Indianapolis
www.imamuseum.org

WEDNESDAY 16
LECTURE
New York's High Line
7:00 p.m.
Walker Art Center
1750 Hennepin Ave.
Minneapolis
www.walkerart.org

THURSDAY 17
LECTURE
Leisa Rundquist
More Little Ways:
Henry Darger, Littleness and Fires "big or small"
6:00 p.m.
The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art
756 North Milwaukee Ave.
Chicago
www.art.org

FRIDAY 18

EVENT
Click Flash Cut
8:00 p.m.
University of Michigan
Museum of Art
525 South State St., Ann Arbor
www.umma.umich.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Kill Them Before They Multiply
Columbus Museum of Art
480 East Broad St., Columbus
www.columbusmuseum.org

Robert Bergman:
Portraits, 1986–1995
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
2400 3rd Ave. South,
Minneapolis
www.artsmia.org

Overview_2010
Bruno David Gallery
3721 Washington Blvd.
St. Louis
www.brunodavidgallery.com

Lloyd Burling
Laughter Staggers On
Golden Gallery
816 West Newport Ave.
Chicago
www.golden-gallery.org

SATURDAY 19
EVENT
Solstice Party
5:30 p.m.
Cleveland Museum of Art
11150 East Blvd., Cleveland
www.clemusart.com

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Sister Corita:
The Joyous Revolutionary
University of Michigan
Museum of Art
525 South State St., Ann Arbor
www.umma.umich.edu

Looking after Louis Sullivan:
Photographs, Drawings, and Fragments
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.,
Chicago
www.artic.edu

Collage
Thomas McCormick Gallery
835 West Washington Blvd.
Chicago
www.thomasmccormick.com

FRIDAY 25
EXHIBITION OPENING
Contemporary Collecting:
Selections from the Donna and Howard Stone Collection
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.
Chicago
www.artic.edu

SATURDAY 26
LECTURE
Guillermo Kuitca
2:00 p.m.
Walker Art Center
1750 Hennepin Ave.
Minneapolis
www.walkerart.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Alexander Calder and Contemporary Art:
Form, Balance, Joy
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
220 East Chicago Ave.
Chicago
www.mcachicago.org

WITH THE KIDS

You Name It
10:00 a.m.
The Nelson-Atkins
Museum of Art
4525 Oak St.
Kansas City
www.nelson-atkins.org

Family Workshop: Creature Capers Scavenger Hunt
1:30 p.m.
University of Michigan
Museum of Art
525 South State St.
Ann Arbor
www.umma.umich.edu

SUNDAY 27
EXHIBITION OPENING
Richard Roth and Hilary Wilder
The Suburban
125 North Harvey Ave.
Oak Park
www.thesuburban.org

JULY

SUNDAY 4
EXHIBITION OPENING
Facing Freedom
Chicago History Museum
1601 North Clark St.
Chicago
www.chicagohistory.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Arthur Pope and a New Survey of Persian Art
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.,
Chicago
www.artic.edu

TUESDAY 6
EXHIBITION OPENING
Here/Not There
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
220 East Chicago Ave.
Chicago
www.mcachicago.org

WEDNESDAY 8
LECTURE
Warrington Colescott
Living Dangerously: The Art of Visual Satire
5:30 p.m.
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Museum Dr.
Milwaukee
www.mam.org

EVENT
Contemporary X Pecha Kucha
6:00 p.m.
Contemporary Art Museum
St. Louis
3750 Washington Blvd.
St. Louis
www.contemporarystl.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Intimate Images of Love and Loss: Portrait Miniatures
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Museum Dr.
Milwaukee
www.mam.org

THURSDAY 15
LECTURES
Laurie Olin
Finding Lost Spaces
7:00 p.m.
University of Minnesota
College of Design
100 Rapson Hall
Minneapolis
www.walkerart.org

Race, Community, and the Museum in 21st-Century Milwaukee
6:15 p.m.
Milwaukee Art Museum
700 North Museum Dr.
Milwaukee
www.mam.org

SATURDAY 17

LECTURES
Greg Willerer, Patrick Crouch, Mark Covington, Ashley Atkinson, et al.

Urban Farming: Fiction, Fable and the Facts
7:00 p.m.
Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit
4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit
www.mocadetroit.org

William A. Ewing
Right Time, Right Man, Right Place: Edward Steichen and the Birth of Modern Fashion Photography
1:00 p.m.
The Nelson-Atkins
Museum of Art
4525 Oak St., Kansas City
www.nelson-atkins.org

EVENT

Bus Tour: Devil in the White City
1:00 p.m.
Chicago History Museum
1601 North Clark St., Chicago
www.chicagohistory.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
Arthur Pope and a New Survey of Persian Art
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.,
Chicago
www.artic.edu

SUNDAY 25
EXHIBITION OPENING
Henri Cartier-Bresson:
The Modern Century
Art Institute of Chicago
111 South Michigan Ave.,
Chicago
www.artic.edu

WEDNESDAY 28
EXHIBITION OPENING
Deconstructed Views
Murphy Hill Gallery
3333 West Arthington Ave.
Chicago
www.murphyhillgallery.com

SATURDAY 31
EVENT
Al Walavich
Hidden Chicago Tour
1:00 p.m.
Chicago History Museum
1601 North Clark St., Chicago
www.chicagohistory.org

EXHIBITION OPENING
UMMA Projects:
Jakob Kolding
University of Michigan
Museum of Art
525 South State St., Ann Arbor
www.umma.umich.edu

AUGUST
SATURDAY 7
EVENT
Tour: Chicago's Asian Community
1:00 p.m.
Chicago History Museum
1601 North Clark St., Chicago
www.chicagohistory.org

TUESDAY 10
LECTURE
Carrie Gundersdorf
6:00 p.m.
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
220 East Chicago Ave.
Chicago
www.mcachicago.org



WALKER EVANS: DECADE BY DECADE

Cincinnati Art Museum

953 Eden Park Drive
Cincinnati
Through September 5

From Western ghost towns to New York City subway riders, Walker Evans' black-and-white images influenced 20th-century photography and shaped the way Americans view their country and themselves. "In a career that spanned five decades, Evans radically altered the collective American consciousness," according to curator James Crump. Finding beauty in banal objects that others would ignore, Evans sought to abandon romantic idealism, working for the Farm Security Administration to document victims of the Great Depression in the rural South. He was attracted to landscapes and buildings, and among his first works was the rarely exhibited study of New England's Victorian houses, shown in 1962 at the Museum of Modern Art's first exhibition devoted to the work of a single photographer. Also included are prints from Evans' trips to Tahiti and Cuba, as well as roadside scenes such as *Pabst Blue Ribbon Sign, Chicago, Illinois* (1946, above). But the exhibit moves beyond nostalgia, charting Evans' reascendancy by examining his final photographs. Shot with the then-new Polaroid SX-70 in the early 1970s, they conclude the impressive body of work by the St. Louis-born master.



JEF GEYS

JEF GEYS: WOODWARD AVENUE

Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit
4454 Woodward Avenue, Detroit
Through July 25

Relentlessly fascinated by forms of documentation, Belgian artist Jef Geys has gathered a meticulous inventory of immediate surroundings, combining strategies of conceptual, educational, and typological investigation. For the Belgian Pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennale, he asked four acquaintances who lived or worked in a large city—Villeurbanne in eastern France, along with New York, Moscow, and Brussels—to map out one square kilometer, and within that surface search for 12 wild plants growing in the streets, otherwise known as weeds. Named *Quadra Medicinalis*, that interdisciplinary exhibition became the kickoff for Geys' newest body of work. An expansion as well as a departure, the new project is based in Detroit, specifically the Woodward Avenue corridor. Incorporating plants from 12 intersections beginning at Cadillac Square and ending at Saginaw Street, the installation includes dried plant specimens alongside their scientific descriptions and analyses (including *Trifolium pratense*, or red clover, above), plus photographs and maps. This rare U.S. exhibition by the artist also features two new films that record an ethnobotany workshop with traditional health practitioners in Bolivia.

The Future at Home

Becoming Bucky Fuller
Loretta Lorance
MIT Press, \$29.95

Fuller Houses: R. Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion Dwellings and Other Domestic Adventures
Federico Neder
Lars Müller Publishers, \$39.95

Ever the anomaly in the world of architecture—from his early days peddling standardized concrete masonry units to his later forays into geodesic domes—Buckminster Fuller (1895–1983) remains an enigma, even after finally being invited into the inner rings of the architectural pantheon. Following on 2008's *Starting with the Universe*, organized by the Whitney Museum, come two books—one on him, one about his ideas—centering on Fuller's epic struggle with the evolution of the Dymaxion House.

Loretta Lorance focuses on Fuller's biography and on the

Dymaxion House in *Becoming Bucky Fuller*, which she declares a "revisionist study." The other, *Fuller Houses* by Federico Neder, uses Fuller as an armature to explore the ideas and images surrounding his development of the Dymaxion House as something less concerned with an "object than with the project." As narrow as the former is, the latter is broad. And this concern with the project, Lorance has determined, follows out of Fuller's failure at producing the object.

Lorance argues that Fuller revamped himself as a visionary of domestic architecture

when he could not mass-produce his Dymaxion House. Fuller spent the better part of the late 1920s to 1930s developing various prototypes of what eventually became the only two built Dymaxion Houses, which were recently coupled into an exhibition at the Henry Ford museum. Despite his unwavering belief and determination that his designs were the future of domestic architecture, Fuller eventually realized architectural, societal, industry, and most importantly, investor support were not forthcoming. Thus he decided to reposition himself, according to Lorance, as an idealistic visionary.

Fuller's development as a salesman and a dedicated entrepreneur, for better or worse, is well documented. He tenaciously engaged possible investors, presented questionable patents, and requested that the AIA support his project. The AIA flatly rejected Fuller on the grounds that they do not support mass-



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produced architecture. Lorance uses these opportunities to discern the factual Fuller from the fictional—such as his presenting the

Dymaxion as a project ready for production—by highlighting discrepancies between accepted history and "fact."

However, only in the last

chapter does Lorance delve into "revisioning" Fuller's history. The evidence for this emerges from the autobiographical **continued on page 18**

CHANNELING A BETTER CUBA

Utopía Posible: Felipe Dulzaides
The Graham Foundation
Madlener House
4 West Burton Place, Chicago
Through July 17



The School of Dramatic Arts under construction, 1961-1965.

doxy that prevailed in much of the world at the time, and before the Soviet-influenced cell-block aesthetic took hold in Cuba. Around 1998, the government began to show an interest in completing the complex.

Dulzaides, born in Cuba in 1965, had studied at the visual arts school in the 1980s, but fled Cuba and eventually became an American citizen. In 1999 he visited the campus, where he discovered that the ballet school site had been reclaimed from the jungle overgrowth. While there, he took it upon himself to clean out the clogged series of stepped drainage channels that span the building's rooftop, an act which ultimately motivated the entire project.

Central to the show are two 30-minute films. *Utopía Posible* documents the last decade of Gottardi's progress—or lack thereof—in trying to complete the Drama School complex. Since 2004, he's developed four additional concepts for the project; unlike Porro and Garatti, Gottardi redesigned his building numerous times because he felt it had to be a building of today rather than that of half a century ago. (All three architects, now in their 80s, are still active.) In addition to offering a close look at the beauty of the architecture, including

footage of Dulzaides cleaning out the drainage channels, the film serves as a cautionary tale of the too-often tortuous process of design and construction common to every building project.

Next Time It Rains is less a documentary than Dulzaides' very personal rumination on the beauty of the National Schools campus, focusing on the School of Ballet and really providing the essence of the exhibition. Sequences of Porro discussing the work with Dulzaides are spliced with those of a ballet dancer improvising in the unfinished building, teenagers clambering over the rooftops, and images of water coursing through the channels.

If there's any deficiency to the show, it's that you have to do a fair amount of digging to find the full context for the films. There is one introductory wall text in the outer lobby of Madlener House, but the wall cards in the exhibit itself offer little more than the titles and dates of the work. That said, numerous background materials are available, and you'd be well advised to look at them to appreciate the show fully.

Utopía Posible isn't a show to breeze through quickly. It takes time and contemplation. If you give it that, the image of a place—and of a lost future—comes briefly into view.

PHILIP BERGER IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.

While *Utopía Posible*, a show assembled by the artist and filmmaker Felipe Dulzaides at the Graham Foundation, has many of the trappings of a standard architecture exhibition—plans, photos, models, CAD images—it's anything but conventional. On its surface, the show documents the saga of Cuba's famously unfinished National Schools of the Arts, which the Castro government envisioned as a city of arts built on the site

of the old Havana Country Club that would reflect the revolutionary fervor of the times. Two films by Dulzaides add a personal dimension to the show, illuminating the role that the schools played in the country's artistic development and in its ideological aspirations.

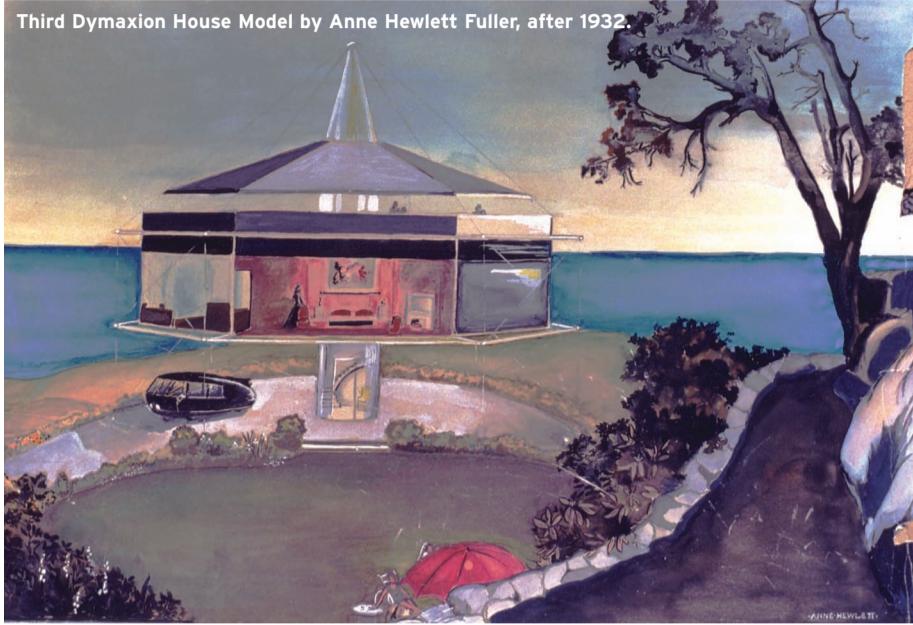
Italian architect Roberto Gottardi designed the Dramatic Arts School. Ricardo Porro designed the Ballet and Dance schools, and Vittorio Garatti

designed the schools of Music and Plastic (i.e. visual) Arts; both are Cuban. Planning began in 1961 and together, the architects selected a unifying vocabulary of locally produced brick (motivated by the inability to acquire concrete, due to ongoing U.S. embargoes) and Catalan structural arches. By 1965, the dance and visual arts schools had been completed, and the theater, ballet, and music schools were underway when

the government abruptly halted construction. In the ensuing decades, the campus was used, but the incomplete structures decayed in the jungle environment.

By the 1990s, largely through the work of the architectural historian John Loomis, the schools had attracted recognition as lost masterpieces, testament to a brief, brilliant period of modernist innovation far removed from the Mies/Corbu ortho-

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JUNE 9, 2010

**THE FUTURE AT HOME**

continued from page 17 notes Fuller wrote in 1939 for a colleague at Time, Inc. for an unpublished article. Fuller consciously came to terms with his failing enterprise and focused on promoting the visionary, futuristic aspects of his design. This document provided the historical base for all subsequent interviews and histories. This is the revisionist study, and Lorance painstakingly provides the lead up to it.

As much as Lorance focuses on Fuller's personality during the development of the Dymaxion House, Federico Neder focuses on the cultural context happening concurrently to Fuller's perpetually transforming project. Readers encounter Diego Rivera, Adolf Loos, Frederick Kiesler, and the ever-present Le Corbusier, among others.

Fuller Houses categorizes itself around themed chapters on innovation, enclosure, lightness, form, control, and

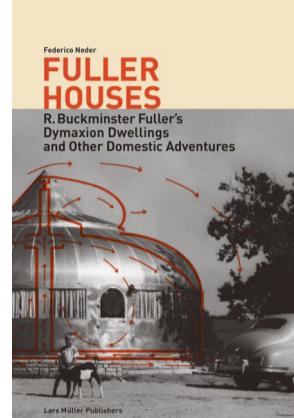
the artifact that the Dymaxion House ultimately became. Each calls upon contemporaries of Fuller to explicate the timeliness of his theories, practices, or their advanced nature.

The first, "Flying Fish," tackles the influence of progress and innovation that ultimately yielded to aerodynamics. As such, Fuller presented the Dymaxion as an engineering and technological feat that reduces friction with the natural environment and reduces the physical labor

of inhabitants so they could devote themselves to other, more pleasurable or self-enriching endeavors.

One of the odder pairings is the discrepancy between the stark lines of Adolf Loos' 1903 apartment and the overly textured and cushioned interior. This was the exact approach Fuller took to make the unfamiliar form of the Dymaxion seem more domestic to potential investors. Neder reveals this as the root of the discrepancy between yearning for technological advancement and a cushy lifestyle.

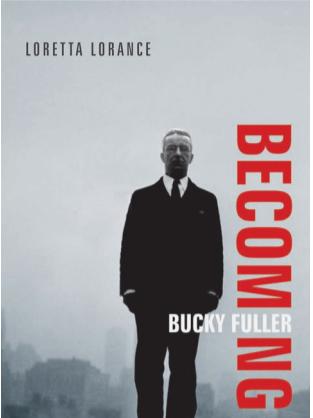
In the chapter "Industrial Dance," the image of Diego Rivera inspecting Fuller's Dymaxion Car initiates the conversation between the intermingling of the machine and the organic, such as Rivera represented it in his murals. However, while Fuller's rounded forms, Neder points out, coincide with aesthetic developments, they really evolve from his technological investigations. The chapter concludes with comparing Kiesler's *Endless House* to the Dymaxion House as both projects combine "in a single gesture the sensuality of form and the precision of



geometry." Neder notes that the former failed to escape abstraction and the latter couldn't escape the limits of technology.

Neder's final pages continue the vector of these themes into contemporary investigation—the sinuous forms, techno-aesthetics, and prefabrication. Ultimately, both books illustrate that the Dymaxion House at different stages of its development meant something different even to its designer, either as a product of the day or a vision of the future.

I found Lorance's book not difficult to read but difficult to enjoy. Its highly academic tone and structure focuses on personal minutiae and



COURTESY LARS MÜLLER AND MIT PRESS

rests well in the hands of researchers. Written chronologically, the book progresses from event to event, strung together with quotes and citations, dry facts over compelling narrative. Conversely, Neder's book reads as a comparative history that ties together architectural and artistic achievements to create a context of creativity. Anecdotes and disparate references make interesting revelations and connections. These create a richer understanding of the items that intrigued Fuller's investigations as well as the broader society into which Fuller loosed his provocations.

JAMES WAY IS A NEW YORK-BASED WRITER.



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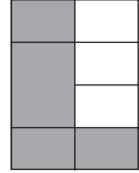
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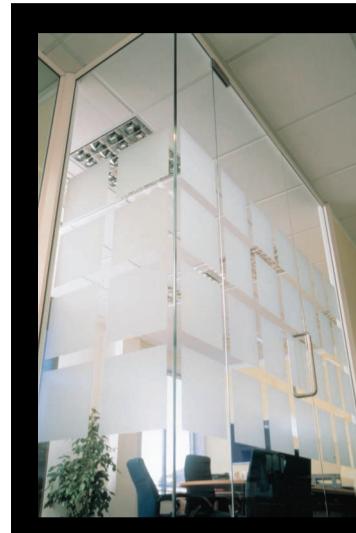
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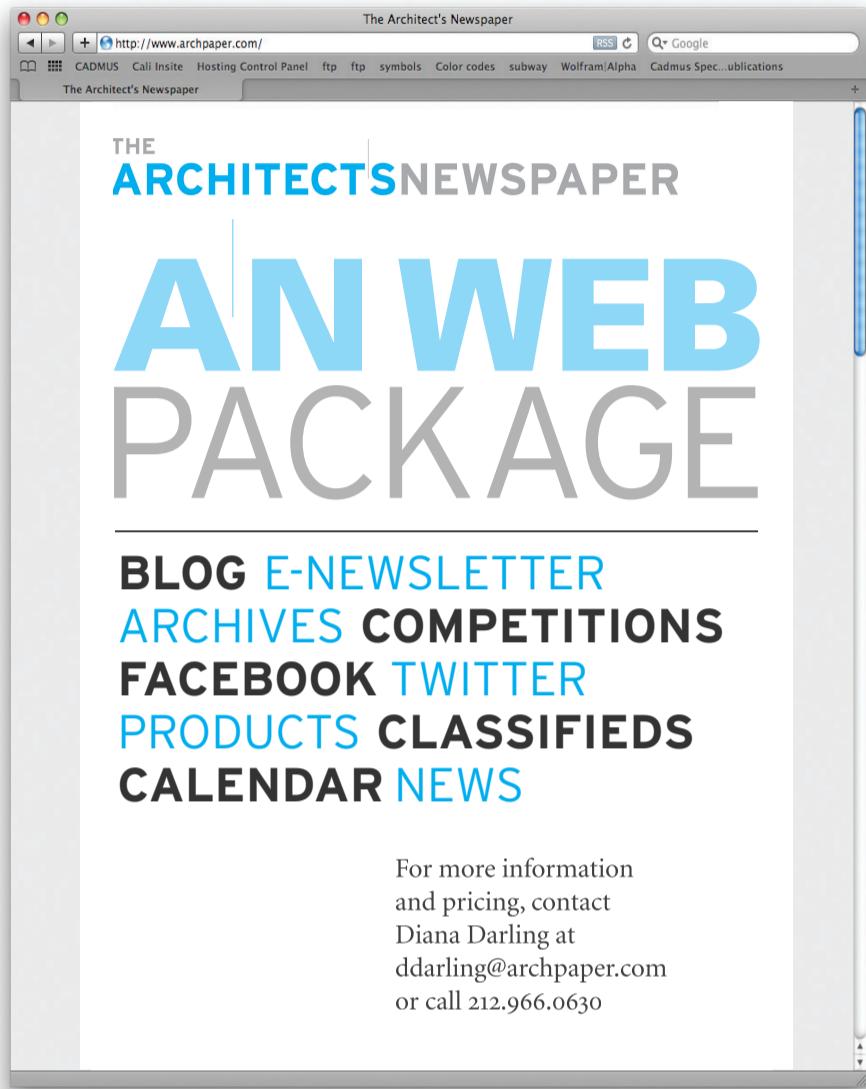
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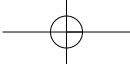
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PORTFOLIO > STANLEY GREENBERG

Top right: Untitled, Kansas City, Missouri, 2005 from the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art designed by Steven Holl; Below left: Untitled, Akron, Ohio, 2005 from the Akron Art Museum designed by Coop Himmelb(l)au; Below right: Untitled, Chicago, Illinois, 2007 from the Modern Wing at the Chicago Art Institute designed by Renzo Piano.

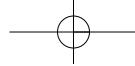


STANLEY GREENBERG

It doesn't take a hard-hat worker to appreciate the raw beauty of a building in construction. And for anyone who has never had the chance to work on the latest high-profile museum, concert hall, or trophy academic building, New York-based photographer Stanley Greenberg captures these structures as they go up, when few would consider them camera ready. His best images, such as this isolated view of a tower-like form that supports Coop Himmelb(l)au's 2007 Akron Art Museum, frame elements with a detached precision that recalls Bernd and Hilla Becher's photographs of industrial and vernacular building types. Greenberg reminds us that what lies beneath the skin of today's avant-garde architecture is often as interesting as what we see on opening day.

An exhibition of Greenberg's photos, Architecture Under Construction, including images of buildings by Zaha Hadid, Steven Holl, Renzo Piano, Frank Gehry, among others, is on view at the Art Institute of Chicago through September 6. A book with the same title is available from the University of Chicago Press, with an introduction by Joseph Rosa.

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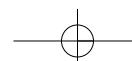
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